DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 233 599 FL 013 908

AUTHOR Malinowski, Arlene
TITLE Beyond Articulation: A Report on Collaborative Professional Development.
PUB DATE Dec 82
NOTE 7p.; Expanded version of a paper presented at the Annual Convention of the Modern Language Association of America (97th, Los Angeles, CA, December 27-30, 1982).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Viewpoints (120) -- Reports - General (140)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Articulation (Education); Cooperative Programs; Coordination; Elementary Secondary Education; *Faculty Development; Higher Education; Language Teachers; *Second Language Instruction; Second Language Programs
IDENTIFIERS North Carolina

ABSTRACT

The importance of faculty development programs involving coordination between institutions of higher education and elementary and secondary schools is discussed. High school language teachers often express an interest in tailoring their courses to foreign language study at the college level. Such coordination requires mutual understanding about the programs and practices being followed at all levels of schooling. Some educators have discussed a plan to institute a nationwide high school and college coordinated faculty development program. Consequently, North Carolina State University initiated a two-year professional development program featuring coordination between the college and local county educators. An ad hoc committee meets to discuss such issues as classroom techniques, the role of placement tests, and student evaluation. The major thrust is to address problems of articulation. This entails defining competencies and levels of achievement so as to enable students to experience a smoother transition to college language courses. The committee has had the desirable effect of increasing interest and concern in the obligations of professional education. (RW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED233599

Beyond Articulation: A Report on Collaborative Professional Development

Arlene Malinowski

In an article that appeared in the Foreign Language Annals in December, 1979 entitled "Articulation--A Dialogue for the Future," John Webb, reporting on the results of a survey conducted by the New York Association of Foreign Language Teachers, focused attention on the unfortunate lack of regular communication between secondary schools and universities. In the rationale that he presents for creating an organized program of articulation, Webb underscores the positive effects that such a program may be expected to achieve: increasing student enrollment in foreign language courses; encouraging students to continue language study beyond minimal requirements; and expanding the role of foreign languages in the career-plans of students in all disciplines. The author recommends that teachers in pursuit of these surely desirable goals begin now in earnest to talk with each other, to discuss their concerns, share ideas, and exchange information.[1] In a similar vein, Peter Demetz, president of the Modern Language Association Commission on the Future of the Profession, presented the following recommendations in an article published

FL013908

---

* The author is Assistant Professor of French and Spanish Linguistics in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at North Carolina State University. This is a somewhat expanded version of a presentation at the session entitled "Collaborative Professional Development Teams for Foreign Language Faculty" at the 97th Annual Meeting of the Modern Language Association in Los Angeles, California, December 27-30, 1982.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

X This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Arlene Malinowski

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

in Profession 1981): The MLA should ". . . develop a . . . project establishing liaison with the elementary and secondary education systems. The project would . . . survey current practices in foreign languages . . . in the schools, . . . improve relations with organizations representing elementary and secondary school teachers, . . . [and] . . . identify and publicize successful cooperative ventures between colleges and secondary schools for improving the teaching and learning of . . . foreign languages."[2]

For the past five years the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at North Carolina State University has shown its awareness of the need for increased contact and cooperation with the high schools and junior high schools of Wake County. Under the direction of Department Head Alan Gonzalez, several attempts have been made to initiate a dialogue between high school and university faculty. Secondary school foreign language teachers have been invited to campus for informal social gatherings; departmental faculty members have been encouraged to participate in the organization of workshops on cultural topics to be presented in high school classrooms; and, since 1980, the department has sponsored a very successful Foreign Language Festival which has brought to campus several thousand enthusiastic local high school students--accompanied by their equally enthusiastic teachers--to perform in talent competitions in the foreign language arts. These activities, whose usefulness has been acknowledged by high school teachers, principals and coordinators have served to open the dialogue, and, at the same time, have made more evident to all involved the desirability of establishing and maintaining channels of direct and continuous communication between the university and the secondary schools.

As Program Coordinator of Foreign Language Teacher Education at NCSU, I have had frequent opportunity to meet and speak with high school teachers.

Often, they have contacted me to ask how we, at the college level, conduct our foreign language classes--what sort of tests we administer, what we expect of entering students, what we require of them during the semester--and how they might more effectively design their courses in order to prepare their students better for foreign language study in college. That this interest in coordinating professional activities demanded a well-conceived response, all of us in the department recognized; the fundamental question was how we should go about bridging the gap. It was at this point that we began to realize how little informed we, in turn, were of programs and practices currently being followed in the high schools. Last year it was suggested that a one day workshop be held at which high school and university teachers could meet to confer on methodologies and objectives. As a one day activity, however, with no guarantee of follow-up, we all understood that the workshop would scarcely be an adequate solution to the problem.

When, last spring, Professor Claire Gaudiani--then a Fellow at the National Humanities Center, and presently at the University of Pennsylvania--discussed with us her plan to institute, nation-wide, a high school and college coordinated faculty development project, and invited the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at North Carolina State to take part in the work, we promptly and eagerly accepted, appreciating the relevance of the project, as she outlined it for us, to the obligations we were attempting to fulfill. Following her instructions, Dr. Gonzalez and I contacted two area high school teachers and a member of the Department of Public Instruction, and requested of them that they form with us an ad hoc committee to draft a proposal for an on-going two year professional development program to be carried out by a team of NCSU faculty members and Wake County high school teachers.

On March 24, 1981, the proposal was drawn up; guidelines were set, and goals defined. Letters of endorsement were then secured from the Chancellor, Provost, School Deans, and Public School Administrators. The proposal circulated at that time met with enthusiastic support, and the first meeting was held on October 15th. Since then, the Update Team has met five times. The meetings, each two hours long, usually keep to the following format:

Announcements first are made by members of the team concerning community events and special programs sponsored by their respective institutions. Next, individual and (or) group projects are discussed and future activities planned. This is followed by a period of open discussion. The topics addressed during this part of the session may serve to illustrate several of the principal concerns of the group: A) Problems (pedagogical, logistical, budgetary, etc.) facing high school and college teachers in Wake County; B) Methods of ascertaining and analyzing student's perceptions of foreign language learning; C) Classroom techniques, and the effective use of textbook materials and pedagogical aids); D) The role of the placement test in measuring language proficiency, and the need for goals (re)assessment and clarification in foreign language teaching, learning, and testing.

The Update portion of the meeting features reports by individual team members on literature in the field of second language acquisition and foreign language pedagogy. This is done on a volunteer basis, but every effort is made to ensure that both high school and college faculty members participate at each session. As a sample of our Update activities, I list: A review of Congressman Paul Simon's book The Tongue-Tied American; a discussion of a number of recent articles in the Foreign Language Annals on promoting communication in the classroom; an introduction to Der Unterrichtspraxis; a critical appraisal of several recent studies dealing with the correction

of students' errors in oral production. Included on the March agenda were reports on and demonstrations of "The Silent Way" and "The Lozanov Method."

Addressing problems of articulation, attempting, that is, to define competencies and levels of achievement so as to enable our students to experience a smoother transition from junior high to high school, and from high school to college, clearly figures among our chief concerns. But collaboration goes beyond articulation; through our collaboration we develop a greater understanding of and respect for the work of our colleagues, and are better prepared to offer and accept useful criticism, and consequently, to contribute to professional growth. In particular, the Update session, modelled upon the activities of county medical societies and bar associations, by keeping members informed of the latest developments in the field, compels us to engage in the sort of critical reflection on pedagogical strategies that can only result in improved classroom performance.

Worthy of note is the increase in interest and concern evinced by team members about their role as professional educators, and their responsibility to students as well as to the community in general to provide effective foreign language teaching in the schools and universities. At the same time, members' awareness of the difficulties involved in and inherent in their work has been refined, and all have expressed a desire to expand their knowledge of the process of language learning. The group at NCSU has in addition shown a special enthusiasm for a project, soon to be begun, to construct an evaluation instrument that will measure language proficiency at the college level. Such a 'home-made' placement test, designed cooperatively by high school and college teachers, may be among the first of its kind.

Collaborative professional development has, without doubt, been a success at NCSU. Members at both high school and college levels have expressed

to me the satisfaction they have experienced through shared effort. We hope that our work can provide, in certain respects, an example and an impetus for similar projects at other institutions throughout the United States. As part of the larger nationwide project entitled "Strengthening the Humanities through Foreign Language and Literature Studies," headed by Claire Gaudiani and funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities through the University of Pennsylvania, the collaborative group at North Carolina State University has now become a model team, and as such will host and participate in a major regional conference to be held in Raleigh, N.C., November 30--December 3, 1983.

Footnotes

[1] John Webb, "Articulation--A Dialogue for the Future," Foreign Language Annals, 12 (1979), 465-69.

[2] "Commission on the Future of the Profession: Interim Recommendations and Responses," Profession 81, 1981, 1-5.